

# CREATIVE GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES IN ADVERTISING IN GAMING

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TECH LAB

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This **IAB Creative Guidelines and Best Practices in Advertising in Gaming** document establishes standards and recommendations to balance effective in-game advertising with preserving player experience across mobile, PC, and web-based games.

Key guidelines and best practices covered include:

- **Audio Ads:** The optimal length is 15 seconds, including clear disclosure and call-to-action, following placement and frequency caps.
- **Interactive Overlays:** Flexible length up to 60 seconds, pair with chat CTAs, and avoid stream obstruction.
- **Intrinsic/Native Ads:** Display and short video formats should be under 6 seconds long and offer seamless creative integration, minimal elements, and simple messaging.
- **Rich Media/Playable Ads:** These ads should provide players with the option to exit the ad experience within the first 30 seconds, prioritize player experience through UX safeguards, and track engagement over impressions.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Always respect user privacy, ensure appropriate content, maintain sponsorship transparency, and avoid stereotypes.
- **Compliance:** Abide by regulations including FTC, COPPA, and gaming industry standards.
- **Additional Formats:** Console platforms, VR/AR, and accessibility merit different guidelines and best practices.

These guidelines and best practices aim to standardize in-game ads through industry collaboration while respecting player experience. They provide essential guidance for advertisers, agencies, game publishers, and platforms to craft creatives that effectively engage gaming audiences.

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# 1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

## 1.1. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These guidelines were developed by the IAB Creative Guidelines and Best Practices in Advertising in Gaming Task Force, which operates under the umbrella of the IAB Games Committee and IAB Games Board within the IAB Experience Center. The creation of this document has been made possible through a collaboration between the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and the Interactive Advertising Bureau Technical Laboratory (IAB Tech Lab).

## 1.2. OBJECTIVE OF THE IAB CREATIVE GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES IN ADVERTISING IN GAMING TASK FORCE

The primary objective of the task force is to ensure consistency in ad displays, ad exits, and audio in in-game advertising. The task force has developed a quality assurance protocol across gaming devices to standardize ads and enhance the player experience.

The rapid growth of in-game advertising has led to inconsistent and intrusive ad implementations that detract from player experience. Without clear creative guidelines, in-game ads risk damaging player immersion, frustrating audiences, and reflecting poorly on advertising brands. To uphold high standards across in-game ad formats, displays, audio, and exits, industry leaders must collaborate to establish best practices that balance effective advertising with enjoyable gameplay. By convening gaming and advertising experts, we can develop quality assurance protocols and creative principles that bring consistency to in-game ads and enhance player experience. Thoughtful guidelines shaped by cross-industry consensus make it possible to realize the full potential of in-game advertising while keeping player experience paramount.

## 1.3. COMPANY PARTICIPANTS AND KEY CONTRIBUTORS

Alpha PrecisionMedia	Essence Mediacom	NBCUniversal
Amazon Web Services	Frameplay	Niantic
Anzu	Gamesight	Odeo
Athletic Greens	Google	Pixalate
Audiomob LTD	GroupM US	Publicis Media
Baker & Hostetler LLP	Hyperion Group	Show!
Bidstack	IAB Tech Lab	Spark Foundry
Chartboost	IBM Watson Advertising	SuperAwesome
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#### **1.4. ABOUT THE IAB GAMES BOARD**

Over 214 million Americans game, and this number is growing with over 80% of Gen Z considering themselves gamers. Gaming is on track to be the universal interaction language of the next phase of the internet. The mission of the IAB Games and Esports Board is to help brands tap into this attention oasis by increasing brand awareness in gaming and establishing standards and best practices to scale the advertising marketplace in gaming.

## BOARD MEMBER COMPANIES

Activision Blizzard Media	Hearts & Science	SuperAwesome
Anzu	L'Oréal	The Trade Desk
Bidstack	Marketing Architects	TikTok
dentsu	Microsoft Advertising	Twitch
Enthusiast Gaming	Niantic	Vindex
Equativ	Omnicom Media Group	Xaxis
Frameplay	Publicis Media	Zynga
Google	Samsung Ads	

### 1.5. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY OF GUIDELINES

This document defines guidelines and best practices for in-game advertising creative development and execution for mobile and PC platforms. The in-game ad formats covered include:

- Audio ads
- Interactive overlays
- Intrinsic/native in-game ads
- Rich media and playable ads

Out of the scope of this document:

- **Console platforms** - PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo Switch, etc. Console gaming involves specialized creative considerations that warrant separate guidelines.
- **Adjacent ad units** - Interstitial, banner, and video ads served around or within games should refer to existing IAB standards.
- **Hardcoded ads** - Branded assets integrated directly into game environments are not covered by these guidelines.
- **Viewability** - An important metric but establishing the criteria for viewability is beyond the current scope of this document.
- **Advergaming** - Custom-branded games require tailored guidance.

These guidelines are for advertisers, creative agencies, game publishers, and other entities creating and executing in-game advertising. The best practices outlined here aim to balance effective advertising with preserving gamers' immersion and control. By outlining standards for core interactive ad formats in mobile and PC gaming, these guidelines provide a framework for developing creative that engages audiences while respecting the gaming experience.

## 1.6. GLOSSARY

As in-game advertising grows more diverse and expansive, it brings a proliferation of industry vernacular covering new formats, metrics, regulations, and more. The following glossary defines common terminology and acronyms referenced throughout this document.

This glossary aims to establish a shared language and ensure cohesion in how core concepts for in-game ads are discussed and understood. It covers topics spanning ad formats, guidelines, metrics, regulations, gaming platforms, and considerations like accessibility. Use this reference to gain familiarity with key phrases and shorthand when navigating in-game advertising.

This glossary intends to reduce ambiguity and complexity for the varied players collaborating to advance the gaming advertising ecosystem. With continued evolution in the space, we invite industry partners to propose additional terms for inclusion in future iterations. The glossary represents an important step toward crystallizing in-game advertising as a professional, structured marketplace founded on common conventions and transparency.

- **Accessibility** - Making ad experiences inclusive for gamers with disabilities.
- **Ad Frequency** - The number of times a user is exposed to an ad within a given time.
- **Ad Length** - The duration that an ad asset is displayed/played.
- **Audio Ads** - The ad placement is purely audio, overlaid during gameplay without pausing the game.
- **Call to Action (CTA)** - Messaging that directs the user to take an action, like visiting a website.
- **Console Gaming** - Platforms like PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo Switch, etc.
- **Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)** - COPPA imposes requirements on operators of websites or online services directed to children under 13 years of age.
- **Disclosure** - Identifying an ad experience as sponsored content.
- **Frequency Cap** - The maximum limit placed on ad frequency for a campaign.
- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guidelines** - Guidelines for truthful and ethical advertising.
- **Impressions** - Instances of ads being loaded and displayed and a standard measurement unit.
- **Interactive Overlays** - An animated graphic ad placement displayed on top of game streams which often includes a call to action (CTA) inside the chat thread.
- **Intrinsic/Native Ads** - Sometimes referred to as native in-game or in-play, these ad placements are “in the game,” a seamless part of the gameplay environment.
- **Placement** - Where and how ads integrate into game environments and game mechanics.
- **Rich Media/Playable Ads** - Highly interactive and immersive ad experiences.

- **Virtual Reality (VR)/Augmented Reality (AR)** - Gaming environments that include virtual worlds or that let users navigate virtual elements in physical environments.

## 2. CONSIDERATIONS FROM EXISTING GUIDANCE

### 2.1. IAB ESPORTS AND GAMING FRAMEWORK

The [IAB Gaming and Esports Advertising Framework](#) is a comprehensive set of guidelines and best practices formulated by IAB to standardize and enhance advertising strategies within the rapidly growing sectors of gaming and esports. This framework defines optimal ad formats, establishes measurement standards, and outlines strategies to engage the gaming audience effectively. It is a resource for advertisers, agencies, publishers, and other stakeholders in the gaming and esports advertising ecosystem for transparent, effective, and respectful advertising practices.

This new document aligns seamlessly with the principles in the IAB framework. While the IAB provides a broader perspective on gaming and esports advertising, the creative guidelines explore the nuances of creative development, ensuring that in-game ads resonate with players while respecting the gaming environment. These guidelines ensure that the advertising content is not only effective in reaching its audience but also ethically crafted and presented in a way that preserves and enhances the gaming experience.

The IAB Gaming and Esports Advertising Framework has undergone refinements with the incorporation of the new creative guidelines. Notable additions have been made in categories such as equipment, graphic style, and genres, enriching the framework's depth and applicability. To better synchronize with the broader advertising industry and the IAB Tech Lab Creative Standards MIME Types Framework, you'll see updated categorical nomenclature. "Ad Context" is now "Placement Type" and "Ad Asset Type" is now referred to as "Media Asset Type." These adjustments ensure the framework remains both current and in alignment with industry standards, offering clarity and consistency for professionals navigating the world of gaming advertising. A detailed exploration of the updated [IAB Gaming and Esports Advertising Framework 2.0](#) is in the appendix of this document.

### 2.2. IAB TECH LAB NEW AD PORTFOLIO

The [IAB New Ad Portfolio: Advertising Creative Guidelines](#) provides comprehensive recommendations for advertising experiences across diverse digital environments including websites, mobile apps, social media, messaging, and new experiences like virtual reality. It emphasizes lightweight ads and flexible ad sizing for optimal consumer experience and page performance.

Specific guidance from the IAB New Ad Portfolio that is particularly relevant includes:

- **Interstitials** - The IAB New Ad Portfolio defines interstitials as ads displayed before, in between, or after primary content. It provides specifications such as requiring a clear close button and avoiding forced countdowns. These recommendations should inform interstitial ad implementations within games.
- **Adjacent Video** - For adjacent video ads, meaning videos displayed alongside primary content, the IAB New Ad Portfolio covers aspects like length, user controls, viewability, and more. These standards help shape adjacent video ads in games so they are not disruptive.
- **Flexible Ad Sizing** - The flexible ad specifications provide size ranges across standard units like banners, rectangles, and vertical units that dynamically fit different screen sizes. This principle enables better integration of adjacent ads in games.

By referencing specifications already established in the IAB New Ad Portfolio, this document builds on that existing framework. Standards help maintain consistency and shape non-disruptive adjacent ad experiences in games, whether display, video, or other formats.

### 2.3. IAB INTRINSIC IN-GAME ADVERTISING MEASUREMENT GUIDELINES

The [IAB Intrinsic In-Game \(IIG\) Measurement Guidelines](#) provide the foundation for consistently measuring and reporting on the delivery of in-game ads. As the creative guidelines aim to establish best practices for creative content and placement of in-game ads, the measurement guidelines ensure those ads are correctly counted and analyzed.

The IAB Intrinsic In-Game (IIG) Measurement Guidelines detail requirements for counting valid ad impressions and viewable impressions for both display and video ad formats. This includes guidance such as only counting impressions after ads are loaded and begin to render, and measuring viewability based on time and pixel thresholds.

For intrinsic in-game display ads, the measurement guidelines specify tracking impression counts after ads are loaded and attached to the game environment. For intrinsic in-game video ads, count impressions after the first frame of video creative is decoded and attached to the game environment.

Compliance with these and other measurement guidelines outlined provides the underlying delivery data to effectively judge creative performance and optimize based on the best practices recommended in this document. By establishing a consistent measurement framework, the impact of different creative choices for in-game ads can be compared apples-to-apples when making

future improvements.

In summary, the IAB Intrinsic In-Game (IIG) Measurement Guidelines form the foundation that enables the creative guidelines for in-game ads to be implemented and optimized. Following the standardized approaches for valuing and reporting ad impressions and viewability leads to informed creative decisions and ultimately better player experiences.

## **2.4. NEW IAB TECH LAB CREATIVE STANDARDS MIME TYPES FRAMEWORK**

The [IAB Tech Lab Creative Standards MIME Types Framework](#) is a cornerstone initiative of the IAB Tech Lab. This framework outlines a standardized set of MIME types specifically curated for creative assets in the advertising industry. MIME types, or “Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions,” function as identifiers for file content types, ensuring that diverse systems uniformly interpret and display these assets.

The benefit of the Creative Standards MIME Types Framework becomes especially clear when used with the creative guidelines for in-game advertising. These guidelines, while focusing on the nuances of presenting ads within the gaming environment, need a foundational structure to ensure the consistency and accuracy of creative assets. The MIME Types Framework provides a universally accepted catalog of file types that guarantee compatibility and uniform rendering across platforms and devices.

The dynamic nature of the advertising world calls for a harmonized approach, particularly when branching into specialized areas like gaming. By aligning in-game advertising with the MIME Types Framework, we ensure that advertising in games is an integral part of the broader advertising ecosystem. This alignment not only elevates the quality and consistency of in-game ads but also bolsters the credibility and professionalism of the gaming advertising sector, making it on par with other established advertising avenues.

For more on the IAB Tech Lab Creative Standards MIME Types Framework see the appendix.

### 3. CREATIVE PRINCIPLES

Effective in-game advertising blends engaging assets and respect for the gaming experience. Regardless of the ad format, the principles that guide the development and integration of these creatives are:

#### 3.1. INTEGRATION WITH GAMEPLAY

Ensuring in-game advertisements work within the game's environment is essential:

- **Seamless Weaving and Native Feel:** Whether intrinsic or interstitial, ads should naturally blend into the game environments and avoid being disruptive or disjointed.
- **Resonate With Theme and Branding Elements:** All ads, from billboards to banners, should resonate with the game's theme and aesthetics. For instance, billboards might display content for a cityscape game setting, and adjacent ads like banners should echo the game's motifs.
- **Avoid Disruptive Ads:** Avoid pop-ups and takeovers that interrupt gameplay. Instead, look for natural integrations that complement the game's world.

#### 3.2. IMMERSIVENESS AND INTERACTIVITY

Interactive elements play a crucial role in heightening player engagement:

- **Amplify Player Engagement and Responsive Ads:** Design elements should respond to player actions, like gestures or motions, promoting a deeper connection with the brand.
- **Engage on Player's Terms and Player Autonomy:** Players should be able to engage with interactive elements on their terms, dictating their own ad experience.
- **Leverage Game Design Elements:** For example, video ads using game design principles are more effective than generic video content.

#### 3.3. AD RELEVANCE AND CONTEXT

Maintaining relevance and context is key for a cohesive gaming experience:

- **Relevance and Genre Setting:** Ads should be tailored and consider the specific game genre, tone, and overall setting.

- **Visual Consistency and Color Matching:** Ad visuals, including color palettes, should match the game's aesthetics. For instance, brighter colors are typical for cartoon-styled games and muted tones for more realistic ones.
- **Localized Ads:** Tuning ads, especially interstitial and offerwall ads, to player demographics and preferences improves their relevance and impact.

### 3.4. RESPECT GAMERS' EXPERIENCE

A gamer's experience should be your highest priority. Some guidelines to ensure a seamless integration of advertisements within this experience:

- **Non-Intrusive Close Button:** The 'close' button on ads should be clearly visible and positioned consistently. Its location should be intuitive, so users don't have to search for it, and it should function reliably, preventing gamers from having to tap multiple times.
- **Avoid Multiple Closures:** Users should be able to dismiss an ad with a single click. Requiring multiple closures may feel deceptive and severely degrade the user experience.
- **Buffer Zone Around Close Button:** Prevent accidental clicks that lead the user to ad content unintentionally by adding a non-reactive buffer zone around the close button. This ensures gamers trying to close the ad don't inadvertently interact with it.
- **Option to Exit the Game:** Instead of making assumptions about the player's intent, provide a clear option to exit the game or return to the main menu. This respects the player's autonomy and decision-making.

By implementing these guidelines, ads can complement rather than hinder gameplay. Obstructive or non-user-friendly interfaces not only break immersion but also tarnish a brand's image in the eyes of the player. It's essential to provide genuine value with clear and intuitive control mechanisms, ensuring players always have a choice in their interactive journey.

### 3.5. AVOID OVER-COMMUNICATION

While in-game advertising is a lucrative revenue stream for developers, overloading games with ads alienates players and diminishes the value of individual ad placements.

By adhering to these principles spanning in-game, interstitial, adjacent, rewarded, and offerwall ads, brands can captivate players without compromising the sanctity of their gaming escapades.

## 4. CREATIVE GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES

### 4.1. AUDIO ADS FOR GAMING

Audio ads in gaming provide engaging and immersive opportunities for brand messaging. However, you want to respect the consumer's gameplay experience and limit disruption.

#### 4.1.1. Ad Format and Size

Audio ad assets are no more than 30 seconds long (15 seconds is ideal).

#### 4.1.2. Disclosure

The audio should include an audible disclosure stating, "This is an ad" at the start or midpoint of the asset. The disclosure should be distinguishable from the main audio message, either by slightly increased volume or with a distinct voice. This helps ensure the ad is identifiable and ADA-compliant.

#### 4.1.3. Call to Action

The main audio ad message should voice a clear call to action that directs the user to click on a companion banner or logo icon asset to access the advertiser destination. The companion clickable asset should display a simple brand image or logo on a solid contrasting background with an identifiable "Close Ad" or "X" control option.

#### 4.1.4. Audio Quality

Follow standard audio production quality guidelines to provide an optimal listening experience. Using quality source files enhances the ad's ability to capture attention while remaining non-disruptive. Dynamic range compression helps maintain consistent volume levels. Include subtle sonic branding like audio logos, but avoid loud volume spikes. Test the final audio mix across common gaming device speakers and headphones to ensure excellent fidelity regardless of the playback method. With high production values and consideration for the listening environment, audio ads can connect with gaming audiences.

#### 4.1.5. Placement and Frequency

Audio ads are best used as reward-based opportunities, skippable interstitials, or user-initiated triggers. Cap the frequency at one to three audio ads per 20 minutes of gameplay. Pacing guidance is one audio ad every three to four game levels but defers to publisher specifications.

#### 4.1.6. Measurement and Additional Guidance

Ad delivery should be measured using SDK solutions compliant with [Open Measurement](#)

[Software Development Kit \(OM SDK\)](#) verification standards to confirm device volume on 100% of impressions. In addition to these core guidelines, audio ads must also comply with [IAB Tech Lab's LEAN](#) initial load and subload specifications. Most importantly, give the consumer control options such as muting audio or skipping the ad to avoid disrupting their gameplay immersion.

## **4.2. INTERACTIVE OVERLAY ADVERTISEMENTS FOR GAMING**

Interactive overlay ads provide engaging and non-disruptive brand messaging opportunities in the gaming environment. They should enhance the viewer experience without detracting from stream content.

### **4.2.1. Ad Formats and Sizes**

Overlays can vary from 15 to 60 seconds, with a maximum duration of 60 seconds. Shorter ads have better viewer engagement.

### **4.2.2. Disclosure**

Comply with any additional disclosure requirements from platforms or providers.

### **4.2.3. Call to Action**

The overlay itself should not include clickable CTAs. Pair the overlay with a clickable chat CTA like a link or button for optimal results. Messaging should reference the chat CTA. Limit chat CTA text to 120 characters maximum, incorporating emojis to maximize visibility.

### **4.2.4. Visual Presentation**

Use intro and outro animations to display and remove overlays. Rounded corners and motion graphics help overlays feel native to gaming streams. Keep text concise and graphics sized appropriately for heavy mobile viewership. Incorporate gaming imagery and mechanics to better resonate with the audience.

### **4.2.5. Ad Placement and Frequency**

Overlay content should avoid covering crucial stream elements like webcams. Streamers need controls to reposition and move overlays. Fixed placement versions can interact with screen edges. Some overlays leverage the full stream canvas space. Individual stream frequency caps of one to three overlays per hour are recommended, with no more than six per hour. Enforce caps per stream channel rather than per viewer. Limit concurrent overlays to one active at a time with 15- to 60-minute spacing between.

### **4.2.6. Measurement and Additional Guidance**

Rely on platform APIs for delivery metrics. Track chat CTA clicks via UTM parameters or

click verification. Comply with IAB Tech Lab LEAN initial load specifications which prioritize viewer experience and avoid disrupting or obstructing stream content.

### **4.3. INTRINSIC/NATIVE ADS FOR GAMING**

Intrinsic or native ads are integrated into the game environment to provide engaging yet non-disruptive marketing opportunities. The ads should enhance the realism and immersion of the gaming experience while effectively promoting products, services, or brands to players.

#### **4.3.1. INTRINSIC/NATIVE DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENTS**

##### **4.3.1.1. Ad Formats and Sizes**

The length of the display ad unit is not relevant as these ads are not clickable.

##### **4.3.1.2. Disclosure**

Comply with any platform or region-specific disclosure requirements related to display ads.

##### **4.3.1.3. Call to Action**

The recommended CTA messaging for intrinsic or native display ads includes concise phrases like 'Join xxx,' 'Visit xxx,' or 'Search xxx.' This text should be formatted to be bold and clearly readable, using as few words as possible to convey the message. Avoid web addresses and QR codes. The CTA should provide clear instructions so you can measure ad effectiveness.

##### **4.3.1.4. Visual Appeal**

Design intrinsic/native ads for the gaming environment rather than repurposing designs from other media. To maintain a clean and uncluttered design, it is recommended that ads incorporate minimal elements (ideally, no more than three visual elements). Avoid busy images and textures and choose simple, bright colors. The ad should not overload the viewer with too much information. Keep a consistent visual look and feel throughout the creative. Any text headlines should be limited to seven words or less. Finally, any creative not suitable for out-of-home (OOH) advertising is also not suitable for in-game ads.

##### **4.3.1.5. Ad Placement and Frequency**

For placement consideration, only use creative assets sized to fit the designated ad space within the game. Don't warp creative unless it enhances realism. The ideal placement depends on the game genre. Follow relevant in-game creative aspect ratio specifications. An explanation of the new [IAB Intrinsic In-Game Advertising Creative Aspect Ratio Guidelines](#) appears at the end of this document in the appendix.

Cap ad frequency based on campaign goals. For example, brand awareness campaigns need a lower frequency cap than brand memorability campaigns. You want a minimum of two ad placements visible on screen at one time, but no more than four or five to avoid blocking critical gameplay.

#### **4.3.1.6. Measurement and Additional Guidance**

Follow IAB Intrinsic In-Game (IIG) Measurement Guidelines for counting impressions.

### **4.3.2. INTRINSIC/NATIVE VIDEO ADVERTISEMENTS**

Video advertising is a seamlessly integrated and contextually relevant ad that appears within the gameplay or narrative of a video game. This type of ad enhances the immersive experience for players while effectively promoting products, services, or brands.

#### **4.3.2.1. Ad Formats and Sizes**

For in-game video ads, the optimal ad length is six seconds. Given the fast-paced nature of most games, messaging should be concise and creative assets short.

#### **4.3.2.2. Disclosure**

Comply with any platform or region-specific disclosure requirements related to video ads.

#### **4.3.2.3. Call to Action**

Video ads are not clickable so the CTA should be short and concise such as 'Join xxx,' 'Visit xxx,' or 'Search xxx.' The format should be bold and readable, and as short as possible (ideally three to five words). Websites and QR codes are not ideal for video ads. Include only one core message or CTA. Messages should be clear so you can measure ad effectiveness. Since video ads are muted, any call to action must be text-based. Critical branding, logos, and the CTA should appear in the first few frames.

#### **4.3.2.4. Visual Appeal**

Design video creative for the gaming environment rather than using repurposed assets from other media. Limit text headlines to seven words and avoid visual clutter, with no more than three visual elements. The logo should be clearly visible and not too small. Leverage the first three seconds for the greatest impact by leading with the logo and call to action. Use only essential, minimal animation and avoid distracting transitions at the start and end.

#### **4.3.2.5. Ad Placement and Frequency**

For placement, only use creative assets sized for the 16:9 or 4:3 ratio ad spaces designated.

Consider the target audience's gameplay habits and tailor creative accordingly. Follow relevant in-game creative aspect ratio specifications. Find an explanation of the new [Intrinsic In-Game Advertising Creative Aspect Ratio Specification](#) at the end of this document in the appendix.

For placement and number of ads, consider a minimum of two ads concurrently, but no more than four or five to avoid interfering with gameplay. Avoid "ad stuffing" which slows down game performance.

Regarding frequency caps, three to five impressions per user per day is considered best practice to avoid ad fatigue, and this principle also applies to in-game video ads. The optimal frequency depends on campaign goals and advertiser preferences, though takeover and sponsorship deals may not adhere to frequency caps.

#### **4.3.2.6. Measurement and Additional Guidance**

Follow IAB In-Game Measurement Guidelines for counting impressions.

## **4.4. RICH MEDIA ADVERTISEMENTS FOR GAMING**

Rich media and playable ads enable highly engaging and immersive brand experiences in gaming environments. However, the consumer's gameplay and control should take priority.

### **4.4.1. Ad Formats and Sizes**

Playable ad experiences should include an option to exit the playable ad after 30 seconds, excluding additional content such as end cards.

### **4.4.2. Disclosure**

There must be a clear delineation between the advertising content and the game itself. Include opt-in and privacy disclosures as applicable, such as camera and microphone access prompts. Messaging should be concise; limit text overlays to under 20 characters and headlines to under 25 characters.

### **4.4.3. Call to Action**

Messages should be concise and limited to the following character counts:

- Text overlays: Less than 20 characters
- Headlines: Less than 25 characters
- Sub-copy: Less than 100 characters
- Call-to-action text: Less than 20 characters

#### **4.4.4. Visual Presentation**

Creative visuals should be accessible across different devices and screen sizes. Provide clear instructional indications for interactive elements and features. Strive for seamless, contextually relevant integration into the game environment rather than disruptive overlay banners.

#### **4.4.5. Interaction Design**

Institute user experience (UX) safeguards like proximity buffers around close buttons to prevent accidental clicks. Follow click actions with a two-second pause before subsequent displays. Maintain a reasonable distance between user controls and CTAs to avoid proximity conflicts.

#### **4.4.6. Ad Placement and Frequency**

Playable ads should occupy a significant portion of the viewport, ideally full screen with framing elements as needed. Hard-coded ads can follow the existing placement and frequency conventions of publisher specifications.

#### **4.4.7. Measurement and Additional Guidance**

Base engagement on completed interactions rather than impressions. Consider both quantitative engagement metrics and qualitative measures of experience impact and value. Exclude entrance and exit actions from engagement scoring.

In addition to these core principles, rich media ads must comply with initial load specifications per the IAB Tech Lab LEAN guidance. Most importantly, gamers should be able to opt into or out of ad experiences.

## **5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADVERTISING IN GAMING**

Beyond creative execution, ethical practices ensure advertising contributes positively to the gaming ecosystem.

### **5.1. User Privacy and Data Protection**

Ad platforms must inform players how personal data is collected and used for ad targeting and measurement, per General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) regulations. Opt-in consent mechanisms give players control over their data and how it's used. Refer to the [IAB Global Privacy Platform \(GPP\)](#) for further guidance on compliance with data privacy regulations.

### **5.2. Age-Appropriate Advertising**

Ads served in games with underage players require additional diligence. Using data signals

like login accounts to restrict adult-themed ads protects younger players. Refer to FTC and COPPA guidelines for rules and marketing practices appropriate for child audiences.

### **5.3. Avoiding Stereotypes and Offensive Content**

Creative concepts should consider racial, gender, cultural, and social stereotypes. Brand safety technology can detect and filter offensive creative content inappropriate for the gaming audience.

### **5.4. Transparent Sponsorship and Partnerships**

If a game includes sponsored content or partnerships, it should be clear to the players. This promotes an environment of trust and ensures players are not misled by the origins or motivations behind certain content.

### **5.5. Sensitivity to Current Events**

Advertisers should be aware of global or local events that might make certain content inappropriate or offensive, even if unintentional. Timeliness and context are crucial in ensuring ads are well received.

## **6. LEGAL AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

### **6.1. Compliance With FTC Guidelines**

In the domain of in-game advertising, it's imperative to follow the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) tenets on truthful advertising. The FTC emphasizes that advertisements should champion truthfulness, deter deceptive or unfair practices, and ground their claims on confirmable data.

- 1.** Validate claims, notably those connected to health, safety, or performance.
- 2.** Guarantee that disclosures stand out as clear and evident to viewers.
- 3.** Accurately represent comparative claims, showcasing genuine differentiation from competitors.
- 4.** Ensure testimonials authentically depict the real-life experiences of actual users.

By committing to these guidelines, advertisers also nurture a bond of trust within the gamer community. Not following FTC guidelines will lead to stiff fines and harsh legal consequences.

### **6.2. Compliance With COPPA Regulations**

In developing advertising creative for games, it is critical to consider regulations related to

marketing to children, especially the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in the United States. COPPA restricts the collection and use of personal information from children under 13 without verifiable parental consent. This affects creative guidelines such as data use, ad content, and measurement. When games have child audiences or users, brands must follow a zero-data approach with no behavioral tracking or targeting. Messaging and visuals should be age-appropriate. Companies worldwide need to research and comply with COPPA and similar privacy laws in their region. While the full legal implications are outside the scope of this document, a baseline understanding of regulations about children’s data will help guide creative strategies and execution. By keeping child development principles and regulatory compliance in mind, advertisers can craft gaming creative that engages young audiences while respecting their privacy.

### **6.3. Compliance With Video Game Industry Regulations**

Navigating the landscape of in-game advertising demands keen attention to the established norms and regulations of the video game industry. It’s essential to:

- 1.** Become familiar with industry standards and practices that govern in-game promotions and advertisements.
- 2.** Ensure that in-game advertisements are non-intrusive and maintain the integrity and immersive quality of the gaming experience.
- 3.** Align ad content with the game’s narrative, tone, and target demographic.
- 4.** Be transparent about any partnerships or endorsements to maintain player trust and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- 5.** Monitor and respect any platform-specific guidelines across consoles, PCs, and mobile platforms.
- 6.** Recognize the global nature of the gaming audience and consider cultural sensitivities when crafting advertisements.

Straying from industry-set regulations and best practices could result in reputational damage or potential sanctions. This guide does not cover all nuances of the video game industry’s rules, but by aligning with basic tenets, advertisers can create meaningful, enjoyable, and respectful in-game advertising experiences.

### **6.4. Intellectual Property Rights**

In the intricate landscape of in-game advertising, intellectual property (IP) rights are fundamental. Several guiding principles related to IP rights include:

- 1. Value Originality:** Using protected materials without proper permissions is a legal

minefield.

2. **Respect Licenses and Permissions:** If you're using copyrighted material, trademarks, or patented practices, you'll need the proper licenses and permissions.
3. **Make Clear Distinctions:** Strive for clarity in your creative works to prevent potential overlap or confusion with existing intellectual property.
4. **Safeguard Your Creations:** If your advertising content is original, explore legal protection. This not only secures your assets, it gives them credibility.
5. **Be Transparent About Collaborations:** Acknowledge collaborations or third-party content integrations for transparency and credibility.
6. **Understand Regional Variances:** Intellectual property regulations vary by region; be aware of these distinctions, especially for global campaigns.
7. **Make Regular IP Assessments:** Evaluate your advertising materials for potential IP considerations, ensuring all content is legal.

For more in-depth advice on regulations concerning IP compliance, get specialized advice from intellectual property experts.

## 7. THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING IN GAMES

This document covers intrinsic in-game ads within mobile, PC, and web-based games. However, there are new platforms and emerging formats that warrant future examination to cover creative best practices more comprehensively across gaming.

This document represents an essential initial framework. Subsequent revisions will expand coverage across console gaming, virtual reality, augmented reality, and accessibility as the gaming advertising ecosystem advances. Establishing consistent creative and measurement standards future-proofs the guidelines as in-game advertising evolves.

### 7.1. CONSOLE PLATFORMS (PLAYSTATION, XBOX, NINTENDO SWITCH)

Major console platforms like PlayStation, Xbox, and Nintendo Switch represent a significant portion of the gaming landscape. As console gaming grows and evolves, future guidelines will consider console-specific creative, including factors like large-screen displays, controller-based interactions, and integrated system-level ad experiences. However, it is important to note that ads created for consoles should align closely with the creative specifications outlined in this document, as the core principles for effective and non-disruptive advertising in games apply regardless of platform. While screen size, input methods, and ad integration may differ across platforms, consistency in areas like ad frequency, positioning, style, and interactivity

will allow for a cohesive user experience and facilitate adoption of in-game ads by players. Thus, advertisers should refer to these best practices as the foundation for console ad creativity, with supplemental platform-specific guidelines serving to optimize rather than drastically alter implementations. Working within this framework will set clear expectations among buyers and enable the seamless integration of advertising across console and other gaming platforms over time.

## **7.2. VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) AND AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)**

Immersive virtual reality and augmented reality gaming experiences represent emerging opportunities for ad platforms. Unique creative assets and approaches are required to advertise in VR/AR games effectively.

The IAB New Ad Portfolio provides initial guidance on VR ad formats like interactive branded 3D objects, 360-degree video ads, and full virtual branded rooms. It also covers AR ad components like visual overlays triggered by scannable real-world images.

Future creative guidelines for gaming must establish best practices tailored to VR/AR games. This includes specifications for assets like 3D models and environments, spatial audio, motion-activated and gesture-based interactivity, and dynamic virtual product integration.

With VR/AR gaming still maturing, these specialized guidelines will be crucial as brands increasingly leverage new formats like playable VR mini-games and object scanning to unlock AR experiences. By optimizing for immersive environments, ads can enhance rather than detract from VR/AR gameplay experiences.

The IAB New Ad Portfolio provides a preliminary framework for VR/AR gaming ads. Future creative guidelines will expand on this groundwork with gaming-specific guidance on producing engaging VR/AR ad content.

## **7.3. ACCESSIBILITY**

Gaming is increasingly inclusive, but barriers remain for gamers with disabilities. Future guidelines should outline creative standards and technical specifications to maximize accessibility in gaming ads. This ensures equitable ad experiences for all players regardless of physical or cognitive abilities.

## 8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The IAB Creative Guidelines and Best Practices in Advertising in Gaming provides a framework for balancing effective in-game advertising with preserving gamers' immersion through standards for ad formats, lengths, disclosures, calls to action, placement, frequency, visual appeal, and ethical compliance across mobile, PC, and web gaming. By promoting greater transparency and collaboration across stakeholders, these guidelines enable advertisers, agencies, platforms, and publishers to create cohesive, non-disruptive ad experiences that engage gaming audiences. This document serves as an essential reference for the industry to realize the full potential of in-game ads and shape a sustainable, profitable marketplace founded on respect for players.

- The optimal audio ad length is 15 seconds with clear disclosures and CTAs that follow placement and frequency caps.
- Interactive overlays can be 15 to 60 seconds. Pair these with chat CTAs and introduce and remove them carefully to avoid disrupting gameplay. Use minimal visual elements and simple messaging.
- Rich media ads should be 30 seconds, max. Prioritize player experience through UX safeguards. Track engagement over impressions.
- Ensure ethical compliance regarding user privacy, age-appropriate content, sponsorships, and avoiding stereotypes.
- Abide by relevant regulations including FTC, COPPA, and gaming industry standards.
- Future guidelines will cover console platforms, VR/AR ads, and accessibility considerations.
- Collaborate across advertisers, agencies, platforms and publishers to balance effective ads with preserving player enjoyment.
- Provide essential guidance for creating in-game ads that engage audiences while respecting gaming experiences on mobile, PC, and web.

### 8.1. ENCOURAGEMENT FOR RESPONSIBLE GAMING ADVERTISING

Games present a unique platform for advertisers to champion responsible gaming habits. Advertisements should avoid endorsing excessive gameplay durations or leveraging aggressive monetization methods. Brands can set a precedent by advocating for well-balanced entertainment suitable for players spanning all ages and risk groups.

## **8.2. CALL TO ACTION FOR INDUSTRY COLLABORATION**

These guidelines provide an essential foundation, but the key to their lasting relevance lies in sustained collaboration. Industry frontrunners in gaming, advertising, creative agencies, and platform services must unite in their commitment to refining best practices. Establishing feedback channels that interconnect creative ideation, player assessments, and publisher actions will drive iterative enhancements. Central to this collaboration is the inclusion of varied player insights, ensuring that the guidelines meet the evolving needs of the gaming community. As with the inception of these guidelines, the ongoing journey demands proactive, transparent collaboration to elevate the gaming ecosystem.

## **9. BACKGROUND**

### **9.1. ABOUT IAB**

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) empowers the media and marketing industries to thrive in the digital economy. Its membership comprises more than 700 leading media companies, brands, agencies, and the technology firms responsible for selling, delivering, and optimizing digital ad marketing campaigns. The trade group fields critical research on interactive advertising, while also educating brands, agencies, and the wider business community on the importance of digital marketing. In affiliation with the IAB Tech Lab, IAB develops technical standards and solutions. IAB is committed to professional development and elevating the knowledge, skills, expertise, and diversity of the workforce across the industry. Through the work of its public policy office in Washington, D.C., the trade association advocates for its members and promotes the value of the interactive advertising industry to legislators and policymakers. Founded in 1996, IAB is headquartered in New York City.

### **9.2. ABOUT IAB TECH LAB**

The IAB Tech Lab is at the forefront of innovation in the digital advertising ecosystem, driving the industry forward with cutting-edge technical standards and solutions. As an independent arm of the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), the Tech Lab focuses on developing scalable and efficient technologies to enhance the growth of an increasingly complex digital landscape. With participants from major publishers, marketers, agencies, and technology companies, it acts as a hub for collaboration, aiming to tackle the most pressing challenges in digital advertising. From the creation of ad formats to the development of privacy protocols, the IAB Tech Lab ensures a secure, efficient, and harmonized digital ad experience. Its commitment to transparency, interoperability, and a better user experience is unwavering, making it an indispensable pillar in the ever-evolving interactive advertising world. Established to complement IAB's vision, the

Tech Lab operates with a global perspective, addressing the universal needs of the advertising community.

### 9.3. CONTACT IAB AND IAB TECH LAB

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## 10. APPENDIX A

### 10.1. IAB Gaming and Esports Advertising Framework 2.0

The Esports and Gaming Framework 2.0 is an updated version of our original framework, developed in collaboration with members and industry experts from the IAB Buying Audiences in Gaming Working Group and the IAB Creative Guidelines and Best Practices in Advertising in Gaming Task Force. This version addresses the latest developments in the gaming advertising market, focusing on practical and efficient strategies for growth.

Our objective with this update is to support the continued expansion of the advertising in gaming market by introducing standardized terms and improving understanding within the industry. This framework is designed to be used internationally and will be regularly updated to reflect market changes. The emphasis is on practicality and clarity, ensuring that it remains a useful tool for professionals in the gaming and esports advertising sectors:

**1. Player** - A lean-in user who is directly influencing gameplay.

**1.1. Environment** - The hardware, software and runtime context around an ad experience.

**1.1.1. Equipment** - The hardware used to operate a video game.

**1.1.1.1. Console** - Proprietary computer systems specially made for playing video games such as home consoles, handhelds or hybrid consoles

**1.1.1.2. PC** - Personal computer systems that can run video games.

**1.1.1.3. Mobile** - Personal smartphone devices and tablets that can run video games.

**1.1.1.4. CTV** - Gaming streamed via CTV (Amazon Fire Stick, Apple TV)

**1.1.1.5. HMDs** - Gaming streamed via Head Mounted Displays (Meta Quest, HTC VIVE, PlayStation VR, Valve Index, HP Reverb, Pico 4, Vision Pro)

**1.1.2. Game** - The software required to play a video game

**1.1.2.1. Publisher** - The company that publishes a given video game title that has been developed either internally or by a 2nd party developer.

**1.1.2.2. Title** - The name of a specific video game.

**1.1.2.3. Player Mode** - The descriptor as to whether a gaming experience is individual or alongside other players.

**1.1.2.3.1. Single Player** - There is one primary ad viewer inside of the game environment.

**1.1.2.3.2. Multiplayer** - There are multiple primary ad viewers interacting with each other inside of the game environment. Multiple players can be interacting online, locally or both.

**1.1.2.4. Revenue Model** - The system by which a given video game generates revenue for the publisher.

**1.1.2.4.1. Free** - A purely advertising business model, no purchase is required of the game or available within the game.

**1.1.2.4.2. Upfront Cost** - An initial sum of money paid before the acquisition of a video game. May also include other preliminary costs.

**1.1.2.4.3. Subscription** - A business model in gaming that applies subscription fees to access the game.

**1.1.2.4.4. Freemium** - An advertising business model, but with the addition of microtransactions that represent low-cost purchases that provide some form of additional content to the user.

**1.1.2.5. Player Perspective** - The in-game perspective of a player in a given video game title (video game titles can offer multiple perspectives)

- 1.1.2.5.1. 2D** - A game where the player's view is locked to a 2D plane on a top-down or side-scrolling perspective.
- 1.1.2.5.2. 2.5D (Isometric)** - A 2D game that uses 3D geometry for the environment and characters, but restricts the gameplay to two dimensions, meaning the 3D effect is purely visual.
- 1.1.2.5.3. 3D** - A game where the player's perspective of objects and the environment has a sense of changing length, height and depth creating a 3D effect.
- 1.1.2.5.4. AR** - A perspective in which the player's view of the real world is partially altered to create gameplay.
- 1.1.2.5.5. VR** - A perspective in which the player's view is fully altered to create a sense of being surrounded by the game environment.
- 1.1.2.6. Genre** - The style or category of a given video game title (video game titles may have multiple genres).
  - 1.1.2.6.1. Action** - Action games emphasize physical challenges that require hand-eye coordination and motor skill to overcome. They center around the player, who is in control of most of the action.
  - 1.1.2.6.2. Adult Video Games (AO Rated Games)** - A video game that can contain higher levels of violent, profane, sexual pornographic content.
  - 1.1.2.6.3. Adventure** - Adventure games normally require the player to solve various puzzles by interacting with people or the environment, most often in a non-confrontational way.
  - 1.1.2.6.4. Arcade** - A game that mimics the gameplay of classic arcade games, including pinball, platformers, and space invaders.
  - 1.1.2.6.5. Autobattler** - A subgenre of strategy video games that typically feature chess-like elements where players place characters on a grid-shaped battlefield during a preparation phase, who then fight the opposing team's characters without any further direct input from the player.
  - 1.1.2.6.6. Battle Royale** - An online multiplayer video game genre that blends last-person-

standing gameplay with the survival, exploration, and scavenging elements of a survival game.

- 1.1.2.6.7. Casual** - A video game targeted at a mass market audience, as opposed to a hardcore game, which is targeted at hobbyist gamers. Casual games may exhibit any type of gameplay and genre. They generally involve simpler rules, shorter sessions, and require less learned skill.
- 1.1.2.6.8. Digital Collectible Card Game (DCCG) / Online Collectible Card Game (OCCG)** - A computer or video game that emulates collectible card games (CCG) and is typically played online or occasionally as a standalone video game.
- 1.1.2.6.9. Educational** - A game with the explicit purpose to educate the player on a certain subject or topic.
- 1.1.2.6.10. Exercise and Fitness**
- 1.1.2.6.11. Fighting** - A type of action game where two (in one-on-one fighting games) or more (in platform fighters) on-screen characters engage in interpersonal combat often in a tournament setting, in which characters fight until their HP is depleted or the round timer expires.
- 1.1.2.6.12. Horror** - A video game genre centered on horror fiction and typically designed to scare the player. Unlike most other video game genres, which are classified by their gameplay, horror games are nearly always based on narrative or visual presentation, and use a variety of gameplay types.
- 1.1.2.6.13. Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG)** - An online role-playing video game in which a very large number of people participate simultaneously.
- 1.1.2.6.14. Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA)** - A game where two teams of players compete against one another on a predefined battlefield. Each player controls one character with a certain set of attributes to help their team succeed.
- 1.1.2.6.15. Music** - A music video game, also commonly known as a music game, is a video game where the gameplay is oriented around the player's interactions with a musical score or individual songs.
- 1.1.2.6.16. Painting and Drawing** - A game that uses art as the main way of interacting with the game world.

- 1.1.2.6.17. Party / Board Game / Family** - A collection of simple minigames designed to be played by everyone that are intuitive and easy to control, and allow for competition between many players.
- 1.1.2.6.18. Puzzle** - A game that emphasizes puzzle solving and can include a variety of word puzzles, logic puzzles or pattern puzzles amongst others.
- 1.1.2.6.19. Racing** - Racing games involve the player competing against time or opponents using some means of transportation.
- 1.1.2.6.20. Sandbox/Build Game** - A video game with a gameplay element that provides players a great degree of creativity to interact with, usually without any predetermined goal, or alternatively with a goal that the players set for themselves.
- 1.1.2.6.21. Shooter** - Players use ranged weapons to participate in the action. Most shooters involve violent gameplay, however, some shooters have non-violent objectives.
- 1.1.2.6.22. Simulation** - Simulation games are designed to closely simulate aspects of a real or fictional reality.
- 1.1.2.6.23. Single Player Role-Playing (RPG)** - RPGs cast the player into the role of a character and allow the player freedom to influence their own story.
- 1.1.2.6.24. Social Casino** - Games emulating casino or other gambling products, either with or without financial capital risked by the player. Sports -Sports games emulate the playing of traditional or fictional sports.
- 1.1.2.6.25. Sports** -Sports games emulate the playing of traditional or fictional sports.
- 1.1.2.6.26. Strategy** - Strategy video games focus on gameplay requiring careful and skillful thinking and planning in order to achieve success.
- 1.1.2.6.27. Survival** - A subgenre of action video games usually set in a hostile, intense, open-world environment where players generally start with minimal equipment and are required to survive as long as possible by crafting tools, weapons, shelters, and collecting resources.
- 1.1.2.6.28. Trivia** - A game where players are asked questions about interesting facts in many subjects.

- 1.1.2.6.29. Word** - A subcategory of puzzle games that involves word and linguistic puzzles.
- 1.1.2.7. Distribution Scale** - The informal categorisation of the resources used to develop, publish and distribute a video game.
- 1.1.2.7.1. AAA** - Video games produced and distributed by major game publishers, typically having higher development and marketing budgets.
- 1.1.2.7.2. AA** - Less commonly used than either AAA or Indie, AA games are games that have neither notably high nor low development and marketing budgets.
- 1.1.2.7.3. Indie** - Video games typically created by individuals or smaller development teams without the financial and technical support of a large video games publisher.
- 1.1.2.8. Graphics Style** - The artistic style of a video game as perceived by the player.
- 1.1.2.8.1. Photorealistic** - An environment that appears visually realistic to the user.
- 1.1.2.8.2. Pixel Art/Low Poly** - An environment that is made up of only pixels. Games appear to be in low resolution graphics that are either 8-bit or 16-bit.
- 1.1.2.8.3. Cartoon Stylized** - An environment that contains elements which are unrealistic or exaggerated to the point of not being visually realistic.
- 1.1.2.8.4. Stylized** - An environment that consists primarily of shape, form, color and line to create a composition which may exist with a degree of independence from visual references in the real world.
- 1.1.2.9. Rating** - A categorisation of games to determine the appropriacy of the content to various age groups.
- 1.1.2.9.1. ESRB Rating** - An American rating board that assigns age and content ratings to video games using six age-based levels (Rating Pending, Everyone, Everyone 10+, Teen, Mature 17+, and Adults Only 18+).
- 1.1.2.9.2. PEGI Rating** - A European rating board established to help consumers make informed decisions when buying video games or apps. PEGI has 5 age categories (PEGI 3, 7, 12, 16, and 18).

**1.1.2.9.3. Apple App Store Rating** - Apple's rating system for games on the Apple App Store, consisting of 4 ratings (4+, 9+, 12+, 17+).

**1.1.2.9.4. Google Play Store Rating** - Google Play Store's rating system uses local rating systems to categorize its games (for example PEGI for Europe and ESRB for the USA).

**1.2. Delivery Methods** - Available mechanisms to deliver ads to the game. One might be tempted to classify this as an attribute of the ad, but it is the game software itself that executes insertions. degree of independence from visual references in the real world.

**1.2.1. Direct** - Manual transaction between a seller and a buyer, that requires direct communication, negotiation, signed contract, guaranteed budget and impressions, and fixed CPM.

**1.2.2. Sponsorship** - Ownership of all or an agreed amount of ad placements within a game by one advertiser for a specific time period.

**1.2.3. Programmatic RTB** - Automated auction-based environment where an algorithm is used to decide which ads are placed in which position and to define the bid for each impression.

**1.2.4. Programmatic PMP** - A programmatic marketplace where real time bidding occurs, yet only select advertisers are allowed to bid on a vendor's inventory.

**1.2.5. Programmatic PG** - Somewhat automated direct transaction where both sides agree on the fixed price and guaranteed budget. The deal goes through the programmatic pipes, and allows buyers more control and visibility than manual transaction.

**1.2.6. Open Marketplace** - Standardized inventory made available to be bought programmatically.

**1.3. Ad Context** - The context within which an ad may be served.

**1.3.1. Intrinsic/Native In-Game/In-Play** - Sometimes referred to as Native In-Game or In-Play, these ad placements are "in the game", a seamless part of the gameplay environment.

**1.3.2. Adjacent** - The ad placement is "next to the game", such as a banner image ad below a mobile puzzle game.

**1.3.3. Interstitial** - The ad placement is "around the game", as gameplay stops and the ad itself becomes the focus.

**1.3.4. Audio** - The ad placement is purely audio in nature, overlaid during gameplay without pausing the game.

**1.4. Ad Asset Type** - The creative asset that may be served in a given ad context.

**1.4.1. Image** - The ad asset consists of a static image to be displayed to the user.

**1.4.2. Video** - The ad asset consists of a video to be displayed to the user.

**1.4.3. Interactive** - The ad asset consists of an interactive ad unit (for example a gamified ad).

**1.4.4. Standard Branded Object** - The ad asset consists of a skin for an object that is standardized across multiple games.

**1.4.5. Bespoke Branded Object** - The ad asset consists of a bespoke skin for a specific game or group of games.

**1.5. User Information** - Data on the player.

**1.5.1. Frequency Capping** - Limiting the number of times an ad is shown to a user within a session or a game, over a specified time period.

**1.5.2. Demographic Data** - Targeting based on specific audience segments defined by demographic characteristics (such as age or gender).

**1.5.3. Geography** - The location of a given user, as defined by available location data such as GPS or IP address.

**1.5.4. Custom Audience Segment** - A selection of users collated based on specific targeting criteria. For example gaming mothers, gaming students or gamers with specific genres of interest.

**1.5.5. Gamer Type** - An informal designation of the engagement a gamer has with video games, and of the type of game they are likely to play.

**1.5.5.1. Hardcore** - A knowledgeable, active and committed individual with a high degree of interest or commitment to playing video games.

**1.5.5.2. Midcore** - A player with a broad range of gaming interests that is more likely to enthusiastically play different types of games, but without the amount of time spent and sense of competition of a hardcore gamer.

**1.5.5.3. Casual** - The term is often used for gamers who primarily play more accessible, less immersive games, but can also refer to gamers who play less frequently than other gamers.

**1.5.5.4. Hypercasual** - A person who enjoys a game that is easy-to-play and extremely accessible, usually without any tutorial or instructions, and that is playable whilst multitasking. Hypercasual gamers are unlikely to identify as gamers at all. but not directly influencing.

**2. Viewer** - A lean-back consumer, who is spectating the gameplay

### **2.1. Environment See 1.1.**

**2.1.1. Live Event** - A large scale live event such as an esports tournament, usually streamed across various platforms.

**2.1.2. Passive Stream** - An individual stream which lacks interactive features such as chat, emotes and polls.

**2.1.3. Active Stream** - An individual stream which includes interactive features such as chat, emotes and polls.

**2.1.4. Video on Demand (VOD)** - A pre-recorded piece of gaming content available on demand by a viewer.

**2.1.5. Game See 1.1.2**

**2.1.6. Stream Genre** - The labeled style or category of a given stream as labeled by the streamer.

**2.1.6.1. Action and Adventure Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content of the action and adventure genres.

**2.1.6.2. Shooter Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content of the action and adventure genres.

**2.1.6.3. MOBA and Strategy Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content related to the strategy genre, and specifically the multiplayer online battle arena sub genre.

**2.1.6.4. Role Playing Games Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content related to the role playing genre of games.

**2.1.6.5. Card and Board Games Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content related to virtual or real life card and board games.

**2.1.6.6. Racing and Sports Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content related to the racing and sports game genres.

**2.1.6.7. Horror Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content with a horrific element.

**2.1.6.8. Fighting Stream** - A stream featuring predominantly gaming content involving fighting and action elements.

**2.1.6.9. Cooking Games**

## **2.2. Ad Context See 1.3**

**2.2.1. Sponsorship** - An event or livestream that is sponsored by one or several brands with real life branding conveyed over livestream or video.

**2.2.2. Host-read** - An ad placement or narrative, read by an influencer or host that is embedded within the content.

**2.2.3. Intrinsic** - Product placement within the content setup, such as branded clothing and props in view of the camera.

**2.2.4. Adjacent** - An ad that occupies screen real estate but does not cover any of the content.

**2.2.5. Interstitial** - A “commercial break” style ad context, that interrupts the content for a sponsored message Includes pre-roll advertising.

## **2.3. Ad Asset Type See 1.4**

**2.3.1. Image See 1.4.1**

**2.3.2. Video See 1.4.2**

**2.3.3. Interactive See 1.4.3**

**2.3.4. Scripted Host Read** - The ad asset consists of a predetermined message to be verbally included in the content.

2.4. User See 1.5

# 11. APPENDIX B

## 11.1. IAB Teach Lab Creative Standards MIME Type Framework

Placement Objects		Media Objects				Placement/ Media API	Transaction	Context Objects	
Placement	Placement Type	Media Type	Media Asset Type	Media Asset IAB Standard	Mime Type	API Framework (Planned)	Delivery Method	Distribution Channel (Content)	Content Context
Player Placement	Intrinsic/ Native In-Game/ In-Play	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoke	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	Text/HTML Image/ JPEG Image/ PNG Image/ GIF (Image MIME List)	SHARC * MRAID OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
Player Placement		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoked	VAST	video/mp4 video/mov (video mime list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
Player Placement		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoke Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoke Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 Object	object with multiple assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
Player Placement	Adjacent	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoke	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	text/html image/ jpeg image/png image/gif (image mime list)	SHARC * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
Player Placement		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoke	VAST	video/mp4 video/mov (video mime list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
Player Placement		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoke Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoke Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 Object	Object With Multiple Assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)

<b>Player Placement</b>	Interstitial	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoke	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	Text/HTML Image/ JPEG Image/ ONG Image/GIF (image MIME list)	SHARC * MRAID OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
<b>Player Placement</b>		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoke	VAST	Video/MP4 Video/ MOV (video MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
<b>Player Placement</b>		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoke Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoke Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 Object	Object With Multiple Assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
<b>Player Placement</b>	Audio	Audio (mtype 3)	Audio Bespoke	VAST 4.2+	Audio/AAC Audio/MP4 (audio MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>	Intrinsic/ Native In-Game/ In-Play	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoked	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	text/html image/ jpeg image/png image/gif (image MIME list)	SHARC * MRAID OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoked	VAST	Video/MP4 Video/ MOV (video MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoked Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoked Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 object?	object with multiple assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Audio (mtype 3)	Audio Bespoked	VAST 4.2+	audio/aac audio/mp4 (audio MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	2: Game (i.e., an interactive software game)

<b>Viewer Placement</b>	Adjacent	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoked	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	Text/HTML Image/ JPEG Image/ PNG Image/GIF (image MIME list)	SHARC * MRAID OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoked	VAST	Video/MP4 Video/ MOV (video MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoked Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoked Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 object	Object With Multiple Assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>	Interstitial	Banner/ Display (mtype 1)	HTML Image Bespoked	AdCOM: Structured Banner Object  New Ad Portfolio: Ad Type	Text/HTML Image/ JPEG Image/ PNG image/GIF (image MIME list)	SHARC * MRAID OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Video (mtype 2)	Video Bespoked	VAST	Video/MP4 Video/ MOV (video MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>		Native (mtype 4)	Standard Branded Object Bespoked Branded Object Standard Interactive Object Bespoked Interactive Object	AdCOM + Native 2.0 Object	Object With Multiple Assets	OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)
<b>Viewer Placement</b>	Audio	Audio (mtype 3)	Audio Bespoked	VAST 4.2+	Audio/AAC Audio/MP4 (Audio MIME list)	SIMID * OMID *	Direct	Site App DOOH Game/XR	1: Video (i.e., video file or stream such as Internet TV broadcasts)

## 12. APPENDIX C

### 12.1. IAB Intrinsic In-Game Advertising Creative Aspect Ratio Guidelines

These guidelines present suggested practices for creative ratios in the gaming industry. This initiative aims to offer flexibility and align with evolving in-game advertising trends, connecting web and mobile formats with the gaming context.

Guidelines Overview:

- **Alignment with high-performing display ratios.** The new guidelines align with the most common display ratios used in the industry.
- **Alignment with video ratios.** The new guidelines also align with the most common video ratios used in the industry. This will ensure that creatives are displayed correctly in video ads.
- **Custom ratios** are not considered a “standard buy.” This will ensure that all creatives are displayed consistently across the industry and that it is easier for media planners to compare the performance of different campaigns. However custom ratios can still be used.
- **Higher quality assets.** Creative and trafficking changes will be made to allow for the upload of higher-quality assets. This will improve the visual quality of creatives, making them more likely to be seen by users.

The implementation of these guidelines is expected to influence the gaming industry. Enhanced visual quality of in-game ads may contribute to better user experiences, potentially leading to higher engagement and retention. Standardized buying processes for in-game ads could streamline campaign creation and analysis for media planners. These guideline specifications are anticipated to improve gaming content quality and user experiences for both advertisers and players, without asserting a definitive outcome.

#### Flexibility in Ad Size and Aspect Ratio:

This section addresses the challenge of detaching fixed sizes from aspect ratios in in-game advertising:

Guidelines Overview:

- **Recommendation vs. Requirement:** While gaming resolutions can be recommended, they should not be seen as strict requirements. This approach allows for more creativity and adaptability in ad design.

- **Minimum Width as a Key Determinant:** The minimum width of an ad should ultimately guide its size on the advertising side. This flexibility ensures that ads can be effectively integrated into various game environments without being constrained by rigid aspect ratio standards.
- **Balancing Creativity and Consistency:** By focusing on minimum width rather than fixed aspect ratios, advertisers can tailor their creative assets to different gaming contexts while maintaining a consistent quality and user experience.

This approach aims to provide a more dynamic and responsive framework for in-game advertising, aligning with the evolving nature of the gaming industry and user expectations.

### **Dimension Analysis and Proposal for Intrinsic Display (Power of Two):**

- To ensure that text is legible, we suggest that any creative on mobile platforms should have a minimum height of 64px.
- To ensure high-quality imagery, we recommend a minimum height of 128 pixels for any creative that only contains images or logos.
- To ensure optimal performance for desktop, console, and AAA games, we advise a minimum height/width of 256 pixels.
- Use the Power of 2 for determining minimum image asset sizes can enhance future quality improvements.
- The suggested alteration provides additional image quality while maintaining the same runtime render cost. In-game rendering consumes the same amount of device power, regardless of pixel filling.

**IAB Intrinsic In-Game Advertising Creative Aspect Ratios:**

Ad Format	Buy Type	Ad Aspect Ratio	Standard Resolution	Minimum Width In-Game Resolution
Display	Web & Mobile	2:3	1:1.5	512x341
Display	Web & Mobile	4:3	1.33:1	512x384
Display	Web & Mobile	6:1	6:1	1024x170
Display	Web & Mobile	8:1	8:1	1024x128
Video	Web & Mobile	1:1	1:1	512x512
Video	Web & Mobile	9:16	1:1.78	288x512
Video	Mobile	4:3	1.33:1	512x384
Video	Web & Mobile	16:9	1.78:1	512x288

**Benefits of New Aspect Ratio Guidelines:**

- The new suggested aspect ratios can contribute to a reduction in the carbon footprint and emissions of ads, promoting environmentally responsible advertising practices.
- Implementing these new suggested aspect ratios can improve the user experience and foster greater adoption of the intrinsic in-game advertising format by ensuring seamless integration of ads within the gaming environment.
- The new suggested aspect ratios are designed to enhance ad effectiveness. They aim to reduce download times, limit unnecessary networking, and conserve device energy, which contributes to faster on-screen ad rendering and a more efficient overall experience.
- Considering that in-game ads typically cover about 1.5% to 10% of screen real estate, adopting these new suggested aspect ratios ensures that ad creatives maintain high quality without exceeding the requirements of a full-screen resolution, thereby optimizing both visual impact and resource usage.

These guidelines are designed to provide a flexible yet effective approach to in-game advertising, balancing environmental concerns with technical and user experience considerations.

## 13. APPENDIX D

### 13.1. Advertising in Gaming Creative Examples

#### 1. Audio Advertising Creative Examples

##### 1.1. Audio Advertising Creative: Example 1

**Brand:** Mountain Dew

**Game:** Avakin Life

**Description:** 30-second rewarded audio advertisement on a mobile platform.

**Ad Provided By:** Audiomob



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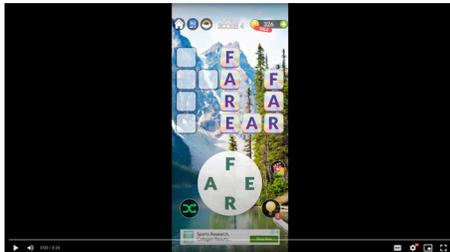
##### 1.2. Audio Advertising Creative: Example 2

**Brand:** Sea World

**Game:** Color Water Sort 3D

**Description:** 30-second audio advertisement with clickable icon on a mobile platform.

**Ad Provided By:** Odeeo



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## 2. Interactive Overlay Advertising Creative Examples

### 2.1. Interactive Overlay Advertising Creative: Example 1

**Brand:** Durex

**Game:** Valorant

**Description:** 20-second overlay sponsorship on a live streaming platform.

**Ad Provided By:** inStreamly



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### 2.2. Interactive Overlay Advertising Creative: Example 1

**Brand:** Domino's

**Game:** FIFA

**Description:** 20-second overlay sponsorship on a live streaming platform.

**Ad Provided By:** LIVAD Technologies



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### 2.3. Interactive Overlay Advertising Creative: Example 3

**Brand:** Amazon Prime Video

**Game:** Call of Duty: Warzone

**Description:** 20-second overlay sponsorship on a live streaming platform.

**Ad Provided By:** Show!



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## 3. Intrinsic/Native Advertising Creative Examples

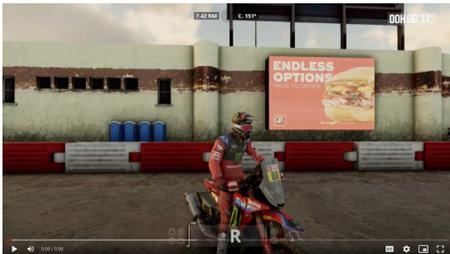
### 3.1. Intrinsic/Native Advertising Creative: Example 1

**Brand:** QuikTrip

**Game:** Dakar Desert Rally

**Description:** 6-second looped intrinsic video advertisement in a console/PC game.

**Ad Provided By:** Anzu



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### 3.2. Intrinsic/Native Advertising Creative: Example 2

**Brand:** Frameplay

**Game:** Racing Demo

**Description:** Intrinsic display advertisement in a racing video game.

**Ad Provided By:** Frameplay



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## 4. Rich Media Advertising Creative Examples

### 4.1. Rich Media Advertising Creative: Example 1

**Brand:** Hulu

**Game:** Solar Opposites playable advertisement

**Description:** 3 minute playable advertisement on a console dashboard platform.

**Ad Provided By:** Xbox / Yahoo



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